

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6114**  
**BILL NUMBER: SB 4**

**DATE PREPARED:** Feb 2, 2001  
**BILL AMENDED:** Feb 1, 2001

**SUBJECT:** Automated Traffic Law Enforcement Systems.

**FISCAL ANALYST:** James Sperlik  
**PHONE NUMBER:** 232-9866

**FUNDS AFFECTED:**      **GENERAL**  
                                 **DEDICATED**  
                                 **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** Local

**Summary of Legislation:** (Amended) This bill: (1) relocates the definition of "traffic control device" for purposes of the motor vehicle code; (2) defines "automated traffic law enforcement system" as a device that has one or more motor vehicle sensors working in conjunction with a traffic control signal with steady red indication or illuminated flashing red light and that produces a photographically recorded image of a motor vehicle proceeding through an intersection. The bill also defines "traffic control signal": (3) allows a local authority to adopt and enforce an ordinance under which the owner of a motor vehicle commits a violation when an automated traffic law enforcement system produces a recorded image of the motor vehicle proceeding through the intersection contrary to the requirement to stop at a red light; (4) establishes certain defenses that may be raised in a proceeding to enforce an ordinance concerning automated traffic law enforcement systems; (5) makes conforming changes; (6) provides that an ordinance may not impose a civil penalty exceeding \$100; (7) authorizes an ordinance to provide for the mailing of warning notices in lieu of imposing a civil penalty.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2001.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:**

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** (Revised) (2) *Automated traffic law enforcement systems:* The specific fiscal impact of this provision will depend upon the type of program implemented and the extent to which the local unit is required to purchase and maintain the equipment, along with the anticipated revenue stream. For example, the City of New York has a program which utilizes cameras to record violations of motorists proceeding through the intersection; contrary to the requirement to stop at a red light. This type of program is commonly referred to as a "Red Light Running program". In this program, the City of New York has contracted with Electronic Data Systems (EDS) who supplies and maintains the system. For this, EDS receives a portion of each fine assessed from the Red Light Running program. The City of New York

receives the rest. Potential costs include the red light camera and sensors. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that a red light camera costs approximately \$50,000. Installation and sensors cost about \$5,000

In addition, the bill requires local authorities to install advance warning signs along the roadway proceeding to the intersection at which an automated camera is installed. The estimated fiscal impact for the signs will depend upon the number of signs needed. The cost for one sign is \$84.96.

*(4) Establishment of defenses that may be raised concerning automated traffic law enforcement systems:* This part of the bill may or may not have a fiscal impact depending upon the number of cases in which the defenses outlined in this bill are used and the staff time involved in the case.

*(7) Mailing of warning notices in lieu of imposing a civil penalty:* The cost of mailing a letter warning is \$.34. The specific impact will depend upon the number of mailed warnings.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:** (Revised) *(6) This bill provides that an ordinance may not impose a civil penalty exceeding \$100.* The specific impact will depend upon the number of instances when a civil penalty is imposed and the amount of the penalty.

**State Agencies Affected:**

**Local Agencies Affected:** Those units who participate in the red light running program.

**Information Sources:** John R. Di Lavore, Director Red Light Camera Study Program, City of New York, 718-786-2233; Federal Highway Administration Web page.